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ABSTRACT

This workshop guide and its accompanying videotape are intended to help early childhood caregivers learn about using the "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" television program interactively and effectively in child care settings. The workshop guide provides preparation instructions, and scripts for three workshops of increasing length: basic, basic plus a communication activity, and basic plus play activity. The workshops incorporate both the accompanying videotape and the "Mr. Rogers' Plan and Play Book". Workshop background materials such as journal articles and a workshop evaluation form are included, as is an outline of the accompanying videotape, "Extending 'Mister Rogers' Neighborhood' to Child Care." The 60-minute videotape is divided into three parts. The first, on television, children, and child care explores the use of quality television and its impact on children's learning, and includes segments from the television program. The second part of the videotape covers themes and format, and traces the evolution of the program and Fred Rogers' involvement with children's television, as well as how the program's consistency, content, pace, and respect for children influence both providers and children. The third part of the videotape provides an overview of the "Plan and Play Book" and discussion of how the book was used successfully in one pilot setting. Segments from the "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Program" are included throughout the videotape. (HTH)

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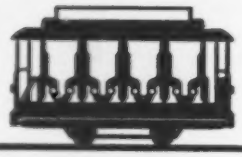
MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD

CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP®



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WORKSHOP GUIDE

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WORKSHOP GUIDE

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I. PURPOSE

This *MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP WORKSHOP GUIDE* was developed to assist coordinators who are looking for ways to expand on the video training. The guide can make it easier for you to prepare and present training sessions for caregivers.

We have designed three possible workshops you can choose from, depending on the time and effort you feel you can put into them:

- The **Basic Workshop** includes the introduction, video presentation, discussion, and wrap-up and should take from 1 to 1 1/2 hours to complete.
- The **Basic Workshop plus the Communications Activity** should take approximately 2 hours.
- The **Basic Workshop plus the Play Activity** should take approximately 2 to 2 1/2 hours.

The goal of the workshops is to help caregivers learn about using the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* program interactively and effectively in child-care settings.

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II. GETTING READY

1. REVIEW THE BACKGROUND MATERIALS
They include:

a. "What is Mister Rogers' Neighborhood?"

b. "The Methods Behind the Magic: What Makes Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Work."

c. "What Others Have Said...," comments from "Extending the Neighborhood to Child Care" (The pilot study)

d. "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood as Affective Staff Development for Teachers of Young Children," an article from ***Young Children***

e. "Visiting Mister Rogers' Neighborhood With Your Children," an article from the ***Journal of Child-Care Administration***

f. Hints about how children watch TV

2. WATCH THE TRAINING TAPE
Familiarize yourself with it. An outline of the video is on page 16. Make any notes you may find helpful for your discussions.

3. CHECK THE BROADCAST SCHEDULE
Find out when *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* is broadcast in your area. If your station is on a different schedule than the printed calendar (*Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* National PBS Broadcast Schedule), you may want to make a calendar for your area.

4. LOOK THROUGH THE *PLAN & PLAY BOOK*
Take your time doing this so that it's easy for you to explain to caregivers how to use it. The introductory pages and index sections could be especially helpful for them.

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5. PREPARE HANDOUT MATERIALS

Make sure you have enough to distribute. Handouts could include:

a. "Let's Turn Learning Inside Out" brochure (available free in quantities from Family Communications, Inc.)

b. Mister Rogers' Neighborhood National PBS Broadcast Schedule (comes with the Plan & Play Book)

c. "Around the Neighborhood" newsletters

d. Background Materials listed on page 3

e. Workshop Evaluation and Follow-up Forms

6. DECIDE HOW YOU'LL DO THE TRAINING SESSION

This manual offers three choices:

- **Basic Workshop**
- **Basic Workshop Plus Communication Activity**
- **Basic Workshop Plus Play Activity**.

For your decision, take into consideration the amount of time, the setting, budget for materials, what you know about the caregivers, and what's most comfortable for you.

7. GATHER YOUR ACTIVITY MATERIALS

If you will be leading a workshop with the Communication or Play Activity, you'll need to gather materials beforehand.

8. GATHER SUPPLIES

For registration, have a supply of name tags, magic markers, and pens.

Make a sign-up list with a place for names, addresses and phone numbers.

Provide pens or pencils and paper for participants who want to take notes.

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III. THE BASIC WORKSHOP:

Video and Discussion
(1 to 1½ hours)

THE BASIC WORKSHOP INCLUDES:

1. **Registration and Welcome**
2. **Introduction**
3. **Video presentation and discussion**
4. **Using the *Plan & Play Book***
5. **Closing**

Step 1 REGISTRATION AND WELCOME:

Offering food is a wonderful way to help people feel welcome, so you may want to set out some light refreshments.

Name tags also help people get to know one another before the session begins. A sign-up list lets you keep all the names and addresses in one place.

Step 2 INTRODUCTION:

General Information about *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*
(5-10 minutes)

Depending on the size of the group, you could open the training by asking participants to tell their names and a little about their child-care setting.

Your introduction can start with a brief description of your station's history with the project and why you're excited about it; you could refer to the anecdotal comments that are included in the Background Materials. You might want to offer a short story about why you appreciate *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood.*

FOR YOUR NOTES:

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Step 3 **VIDEO PRESENTATION:**

The training tape, "Extending *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to Child Care" has three parts, each 20 minutes long. After each section, you can stop the tape for discussion.

Video Part 1: **TELEVISION, CHILDREN, AND CHILD CARE**

This part of the tape is about how children watch television in child-care settings. (20 minutes)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING PART 1:

- *Do the providers now use television with the children?*
- *What have they noticed about the children's television watching?*
- *What specific things should they keep in mind when the children are watching Mister Rogers' Neighborhood? (If you need help getting responses, you can tell them you've given them some guidelines to follow in the handout, "Hints about how children watch TV.")*
- *What helps providers turn the television off when the program is over?*

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Video Part 2: MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD
THEMES AND FORMATS

This part of the tape helps explain the child-development philosopy that's behind *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood.* (20 minutes)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING PART 2:

- *How many of the providers have watched Mister Rogers' Neighborhood with the children in their care? How do the children react?*
- *How many of them watched Mister Rogers' Neighborhood as a child? What do they remember about it?*
- *How many remember their own children watching? What were the children's reactions?*
- *What are some of the ways Mister Rogers' Neighborhood is different from other television programs designed for young children?*
- *Many people say Mister Rogers' Neighborhood has a calming effect on the children. Why do they think that is?*
- *Some adults wonder about the slow pace of the Mister Rogers' Neighborhood program. What do they think about it?*
- *Over the years, have their attitudes changed about Mister Rogers' Neighborhood? Have their attitudes changed since viewing this training tape?*

Video Part 3: THE MISTER ROGERS' PLAN & PLAY BOOK*

This part of the tape explains how to use the *Plan & Play Book.* (20 minutes)

*NOTE: *Trainers who are familiar with the PLAN & PLAY BOOK have found that they don't need to use this segment of the videotape. Instead, they **show** how to use the book, with the participants following along (see Step 4 below).*

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Step 4 **THE *PLAN & PLAY BOOK* DISCUSSION.**
(15-20 minutes)

Broadcast Calendar
Hand out the broadcast calendar. Help providers find the program numbers for the next week.

Explain that the program number and theme are displayed at the beginning of each program.

Tell which channel(s) and time(s) the program is shown in your area. (Note: Some stations delay the broadcast a week.) Remember that if your station does not follow the National PBS Schedule, you will need to make participants aware of your station's schedule. You could make your own calendars to hand out.

Talk about the possibility of taping programs if they're not shown at suitable times for them. Child care facilities can record and hold *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* programs for seven years.

The *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*
Hand out the the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*. Give the participants a chance to browse through it.

Ask everyone to open the *Plan & Play Book* to the program numbers for the next week. The program numbers are the big numbers at the top of each page. Read aloud the "Thoughts for the Week." Page through the activities for each day of that week, noting the brief program synopsis at the top.

> NOTE: *Activities for the newest programs will be in the quarterly newsletters. Remind them to save the newsletters because "Plan & Play Book" supplements are printed only every few years. They are available to PBS stations from Family Communications, Inc.*

Give them time to look at the appendix in the back of the book ("How-to's," recipes, words for songs, and index sections) so they can find alternative activities. The first index is based on type of activity. The second index is based on developmental topics.

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SAMPLE PAGE
"MISTER ROGERS' PLAN & PLAY BOOK"

Program numbers and theme of the week

The child development philosophy behind the theme of the week

The television program number

Programs 1616-1620
Theme: Environment

Thoughts For The Week

Taking good care of the earth is one way children can learn to take good care of themselves, and there are so many ways they can help care for the earth and its resources. When children make toys from cast-offs around the house, for instance, they are actually recycling. Adults who spend time with children can, by example, help them learn about conserving resources. One of the best gifts we can give children is the experience of being in households where people use resources wisely. That's a gift that will never wear out.

Fred Rogers

Songs On The Programs This Week
1617 "I Like to Take Care of You"
1618 "You Are Special"
1619 "Did You Know?"
"Come On and Wake Up"
"Everybody's Fancy"
1620 "I'm Proud of You"

Special Visits
1617 A Recycling Center
1618 Leo Sewell, A Sculptor
1619 Snorkling with Sylvia Earle

Your Notes For The Week

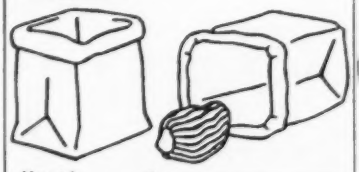
Monday

1616

Mr. McFeely is worried that there's too much garbage in the community dump so he reminds Mister Rogers to think before throwing anything away. Mister Rogers finds a clean paper bag on his sidewalk and uses it to play "bagball."

"Bagball" can help children
- develop coordination
- learn about conservation

Bagball



Materials
- an empty paper grocery bag
- soft stuffed ball

To make Mister Rogers' version of bagball, fold down the top edge of an empty grocery bag about one inch all around. That way, the bag will stand up fairly well by itself. The children can take turns tossing a light weight stuffed ball into the bag. If the bag falls over they can bowl the ball into the bag. You could even use a pair of socks that have been rolled into a ball or a small plastic bag stuffed with clean rags. If you have several paper bags, each child could have a bag and ball.

You might want to talk with the children about other uses for an empty paper grocery bag. You could make a list of the ideas and ask each child to "recycle" a bag from home by bringing it in sometime this week to try out the different ideas.

Synopsis of each daily program

Instructions for easy-to-use and developmentally-appropriate activities that help children talk and play about the program's theme

Special visits, guests and factory videos

Songs used in this week's programs

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Step 5 **CLOSING**
(5-10 minutes)

1. **Distribute Handouts**
   Have caregivers fill out the Evaluation Form and Follow-Up Sheet.

2. **Invite Questions**
   Ask if there are any questions or other assistance the caregivers might need to get started with the project once they leave the training session.

   Remind them that, as with any new project, they'll need some time to settle in with it and to develop it in ways that work best for them. For example:

   - Some tell a little about what's going to happen before the program starts.
   - Some providers do the activity first, then watch the program.
   - Some who work with high-risk children or children with developmental delays tape the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* program and show up to the Neighborhood of Make-Believe segment in the morning and do the activity. Later in the afternoon, they show the rest of the program.

   Reassure caregivers that you are not encouraging them to watch the program every day, or suggesting they do activities after every viewing. Their level of involvement is up to them.

3. **Create a Mailing List**
   Be sure to set up a mailing list so they can continue to get the free quarterly newsletter, annual broadcast schedule, and new *Plan & Play Book* supplements, and any other information about the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Child Care Partnership*.

4. **Keep in Touch**
   Give them your telephone number and address at the station, so they can contact you if they have questions or want information.

   Ask them to send you their comments after watching the program and/or trying out some of the *Plan & Play* activities.

   Plan to do some follow-up in a few months to see how the project is working for them. They also might want to stay in touch with others in the group for networking and support.

5. **Extend Your Reach**
   Ask if they know of other people who might be interested in finding out more about the Partnership.

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IV. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

In this activity, participants will watch a videotaped segment of the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* program and talk about what makes Mister Rogers' communication with children effective. (1/2 hour)

THIS TRAINING SESSION INCLUDES THE BASIC WORKSHOP (Pages 5 to 10) PLUS THE COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

1. **Registration and Welcome**
2. **Introduction**
3. **Video presentation and discussion**
4. **Using the *Plan & Play Book***

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

5. **Closing**

PURPOSE:

This activity is designed to focus attention on Fred Rogers' communication so that caregivers can become more appreciative of Mister Rogers' pacing, choice of words, and non-verbal cues.

Preparation:

- Tape a typical opening segment of a *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* program. Stop the tape just before the beginning of the Neighborhood of Make-Believe. It's best to choose a segment in which Mister Rogers is showing or demonstrating something, making something, or has a guest.

BASIC WORKSHOP

Begin with the Basic Workshop (pages 5 to 9 in this guide).

This may be a good time for a break.

Communication Step 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

Explain that you are going to show a short segment from a *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* program.

Ask them to watch for what Mister Rogers says and does that makes his communication so effective with young children.

Let the providers know you aren't asking them to be like Mister Rogers. Being a child-care provider is very different from being a "television friend." And, what's most effective in their communication with children is what's honest and natural for them.

Communication Step 2

SHOW YOUR TAPED SEGMENT WITH THE SOUND AND VIDEO ON

Discuss what makes this effective communication for young children.

NOTE: *If you feel the participants are slow in responding, you could ask them to work with a partner and develop a list of 10 or more things they noticed: for example, pacing, tone, choice of words. After they've done this for a few minutes, ask them to call out things from their list.*

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Communication Step 3

SHOW THE SAME SEGMENT WITH THE SOUND OFF

Before you show it, ask them to look for what Mister Rogers DOES and how he DOES it that makes his communication so effective for young children. For example, you might note the way Mister Rogers shows the items he's describing and how frequently he looks at the camera.

Communication Step 4

SHOW THE SAME SEGMENT WITH SOUND ONLY

Cover the screen or turn the television around.

Before you show it, ask them to listen for what Mister Rogers SAYS and how he SAYS it that makes his communication effective for young children. For example, you might want to talk about how Mister Rogers tells children about what he's going to do, then does it, then talks about what he did. You might also point out how much silence there is on the program, which allows children time to think about and digest what they've seen and heard.

CLOSING

From the Basic Workshop (page 10 in this guide)
5-10 minutes

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V. PLAY ACTIVITY

In this activity, the participants will create a simple craft project and play out a scene about a topic that is important in their lives.
(1/2 to 1 hour)

THIS TRAINING SESSION INCLUDES THE BASIC WORKSHOP (Pages 5 to 10) PLUS THE PLAY ACTIVITY

1. **Registration and Welcome**
2. **Introduction**
3. **Video presentation and discussion**
4. **Using the *Plan & Play Book***

PLAY ACTIVITY

5. **Closing**

PURPOSE:
This activity is designed to help adults value children's play by experiencing how play can help them deal with issues in their own lives. Through this creative activity, caregivers can gain an appreciation of why children need to play about the things they see on *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood.*

Preparation:

- **GATHER CRAFT MATERIALS**
  The materials can be as simple as construction paper, glue, scissors, and markers or as elaborate as craft project items, like sequins, pom-poms, fabric, ribbon, etc.

  Suggested Materials:
  construction paper
  glue (one bottle for each group of 4-5 people)
  scissors (one pair for every 2-3 people)
  felt-tipped markers
  paper bags or paper plates (for puppets)
  tongue depressors or popsicle sticks
  puff balls or cotton balls
  buttons, ribbon, yarn, string, sequins, feathers, etc.
  pipe cleaners

- **CREATE TOPIC CARDS**
  On separate index cards, print a topic and ideas that can be used in puppet play or scenes. Some suggestions are:

  Topic: DAY DREAMS OR FANTASIES
  Ideas: Romance, Money, Fame, Jobs, People, Travel
  Topic: WISHES COME TRUE
  Ideas: Lottery, Glamour, Power, Authority, Money, Romance
  Topic: NATIONAL TRAUMA
  Ideas: Riots, Fires, Floods, Tornadoes, Assassination, War
  Topic: PERSONAL TRAUMA
  Ideas: Death, Divorce, Robbery, Loss of job, Illness, Hospitalization
  Topic: ADULT DEVELOPMENTAL/HUMAN CONDITION THEMES
  Ideas: Independence, Guilt, Mid-life crisis, Inferiority, Racism, Intimacy, Nurturing, Fear, Saying Goodbye
  Topic: PERSONAL LIFE HIGHLIGHTS
  Ideas: First love, First baby, First paycheck, Moving

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NOTE: *It's more helpful if the adults pretend about adult themes, rather than pretend to be children who are playing. When adults have a chance to act out their own experiences and fantasies through play, they are more likely to see the value of play in children's lives.*

BASIC WORKSHOP

Begin with the Basic Workshop (pages 5 to 9 in this guide).

This may be a good time for a break.

Play Step 1 **INTRODUCE THE PLAY ACTIVITY**

Divide into groups of 4 or 5 people. Each group is to use craft materials to create a puppet show or scene related to one idea suggested on the topic card or one they prefer.

Play Step 2 **DISTRIBUTE ONE TOPIC CARD TO EACH GROUP**

Give the group five minutes to plan which idea in the topic to develop. They might at first think it's easier to play out their idea from a story they've read or a program they've seen on television. Try to discourage that. Let them know play can be more meaningful when it arises out of their own real experiences.

Play Step 3 **DISTRIBUTE THE CRAFT MATERIALS**

Give them 20 - 30 minutes to make puppets or to create a scene with these materials.

If the play is slow to develop, help them talk more about their own experiences with the topic. Ideas will come from the stories they tell. (Be patient; it can take time for ideas to develop. If they need puppet-making ideas, refer to the *Plan and Play Book* activity index under *Puppets*.)

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Play Step 4

ASK EACH GROUP TO PRESENT ITS PUPPET SHOW OR SCENE

Afterwards, you could point out that they've just done something that's very natural for children — children draw from their everyday experiences when they play.

Here are some things you could ask the group:

- *What feelings emerged as they prepared their puppet shows or materials?*
- *What helped or hindered their own play experience?*
- *How could this experience help in their work with children?*
- *What kinds of things do the children in their care pretend about?*
- *What can they do to encourage more play in their settings?*

CLOSING

From the Basic Workshop (page 10 in this guide)
5-10 minutes

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VI. OUTLINE OF TRAINING VIDEOTAPE *"EXTENDING MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD TO CHILD CARE"*

BACKGROUND:

"Extending *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to Child Care" is 60 minutes long. It is divided into 3 sections (20-minutes each), with breaks in between to allow for discussion.

This video tape is designed to help child-care providers learn how to use *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* interactively and effectively with young children. Much of the information is based on the pilot study conducted through WGTE-TV, the PBS station in Toledo, Ohio.

Featured on the training tape, in order of appearance, are:

- **Fred Rogers** - creator and host of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*
- **Patrice King-Brown** - narrator, a TV anchorwoman in Pittsburgh, PA. She is a mother, and her own two children have been in child care.
- **T. Berry Brazelton, M.D.** - Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard University Medical School
- **Jerlean Daniels, Ph.D.** - President of the National Association for the Education of Young Children 1995-97 and Assistant Professor, Child Development and Child Care at the University of Pittsburgh
- **Renée Marazon, M.Ed.** - Chairperson of the Department of Early Childhood Education at Lourdes College, Sylvania, OH, and Consultant to the WGTE pilot project
- **Daniel Anderson, Ph.D.** - Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts
- **Karen Roadruck** - Project Coordinator of pilot project "Extending *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to Child Care," WGTE, Toledo, OH, and former director of a child-care center in Toledo
- **Peggy Charren** - President of Action for Children's Television (ACT)
- **Suzanne McFarland, Ph.D.** - Professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of Toledo, OH, and Research Director for the WGTE pilot project
- **Roberta Schomburg, Ph.D.** - Director of the Graduate Program in Early Childhood Education at Carlow College in Pittsburgh, PA, principal writer of the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*, and consultant to the WGTE pilot project
- Toledo-area child-care providers who participated in the WGTE pilot project

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OUTLINE:

INTRODUCTION

a. Fred Rogers welcomes child-care providers.

Montage of Neighborhood clips and Mister Rogers' Neighborhood theme song

b. Patrice King-Brown introduces the project and its goal of exploring how child-care providers can use *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* and the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book* to help children as they grow and learn.

***PART I* - TELEVISION, CHILDREN, AND CHILD CARE**

a. T. Berry Brazelton and Jerlean Daniels talk about why they feel *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* is appropriate for young children.

b. Renée Marazon discusses using *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* as a model for child-care providers.

At approximately 10 minutes into the tape are segments from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood: *1. A Neighborhood of Make-Believe segment from the week about "When Parents Go To Work"* *2. Mister Rogers and Chuck Aber do 'hand rhythms' with folk singer Ella Jenkins*

c. Dan Anderson describes his research on how young children watch television and its impact on their learning.

d. Karen Roadruck, Dan Anderson, and child-care providers offer helpful hints about using television in child care.

e. Karen Roadruck and host Patrice King-Brown explain important safety factors to consider when using television with young children.

f. Renée Marazon, Dan Anderson, and Jerlean Daniels describe the role and importance of adult caregivers watching and using television with children in child care; Roberta Schomburg discusses the easy-to-use *Plan & Play* activities.

At approximately 22 minutes into the tape is a montage of scenes from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood as Mister Rogers sings "Did You Know...that it's all right to wonder?"

End of Part I

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PART II - MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD:
THEMES AND FORMAT

At approximately 23 minutes into the tape is a segment from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood with Mister Rogers singing "You Are Special."

a. Jerlean Daniels, T. Berry Brazelton, and Roberta Schomburg discuss the ways in which *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* speaks to the emotional and self-esteem needs of young children.

b. Host Patrice King-Brown shares the history and evolution of the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* program.

c. Fred Rogers talks about why he became involved with children's television.

d. The format of a typical episode of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* is discussed. Fred Rogers talks more about the Neighborhood emphasis on helping young children talk about feelings.

e. T. Berry Brazelton shares ideas about the importance of Fred Rogers' "You Are Special" message to young children. Dan Anderson discusses the significance of the pacing and simplicity of the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* program.

f. Peggy Charren discusses the effects of Mister Rogers' songs.

At approximately 33 minutes into the tape are two segments from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood:
1. Mister Rogers sings "Everybody's Fancy"
2. Mister Rogers sings "What Do You Do With the Mad That You Feel?"

g. The program's consistency, content, pace, and respect for children are cited by Suzanne McFarland.

h. Child-care providers in Toledo tell how they changed their outlooks and approaches after using *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* regularly and interactively in the child-care setting. Suzanne McFarland, Dan Anderson and Renée Marazon comment on how the program and materials affected providers.

At approximately 40 minutes into the tape is a segment from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood where Mister Rogers visits with Jeff Erlanger (a young boy in a wheelchair), and they sing "It's You I Like."

End of Part II

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PART III - MISTER ROGERS' PLAN & PLAY BOOK

At approximately 42 minutes into the tape is a montage of scenes from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood as Mister Rogers sings "You've Got to Do It."

a. Roberta Schomburg talks about creating the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book* to offer providers developmentally-appropriate activities for each program. Host Patrice King-Brown describes its use in the Toledo study.

b. The overview of the *Plan & Play Book* focuses on the Introduction, Activity pages, Reference and Index sections. Providers are shown how to use the book in conjunction with the program's broadcast schedule.

c. Roberta Schomburg and child-care providers from the pilot project talk about how they used the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*.

At approximately 52 minutes into the tape is a segment from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood where Mister Rogers has a stuffed toy dog and talks about taking care of others. He sings "I'm Taking Care of You."

d. A Toledo child-care provider, Renée Marazon, and Jerlean Daniels talk about the positive effects of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* on caregivers and children.

e. Host Patrice King-Brown wraps up with a review of the training tape.

Mister Rogers sings "It's Such a Good Feeling" to a montage of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood scenes.

f. Fred Rogers offers closing remarks of encouragement and thanks to child-care providers.

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MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD

CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP®

WORKSHOP BACKGROUND MATERIALS

Articles and Information about the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Child Care Partnership*

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WHAT IS MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD®

First broadcast on PBS in 1968, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* is the longest-running program on public television. Fred Rogers has become a beloved and trusted visitor to three generations of children and parents, and an interpreter of early childhood who is respected by psychologists and educators across the country. Adults sometimes wonder what is so compelling about this soft-spoken man, but children know. He brings them a one-to-one human affirmation of their self-worth, and offers them a place where they feel accepted, safe, and understood. In his Neighborhood, friends help children find within themselves the courage to grow.

What's Different About It?

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood is unique in both form and content. By speaking directly to the camera, as if to a single "television friend," Rogers establishes with his viewer an intimacy that is heightened by his easy, conversational style. Rogers has time for wondering aloud, for doing simple tasks such as changing from sport coat and street shoes to cardigan and tennis shoes, feeding fish, cleaning up. The camera lingers, giving the viewer ample time to look carefully at a face, an object, or a process. Rogers is often in close-up — talking with, rather than to, the viewer, and viewing children often join in the dialogue. The pacing of each program is meticulously planned and approximates the pacing of a visit between two friends who have important things to talk about.

And the conversation ***is*** about important things. *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* was the first, and remains the outstanding, example of a television program about feelings — about love, fear, sadness, jealousy, anger, friendship, trust, joy, and satisfaction.

What's Its Purpose?

The most important goal of the series is to help strengthen a child's sense of self-esteem. While stressing the unique value of each human being, Rogers affirms our common humanity: the hopes and feelings we all share. Working from a strong and consistent developmental framework, Rogers talks candidly about childhood anxieties, about concerns over separation from loved ones, about the wholeness of our bodies, about self-control and learning to wait, and about the difference between fantasy and reality.

(Continued)

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In each half hour, warm and whimsical fun is caringly balanced with discussions about things and feelings that matter in childhood. By letting children know what to expect, Fred Rogers has helped them cope with potentially frightening experiences such as going to the doctor and hospital, going to the dentist and barber, going to school, and moving to a new home. Through the bond of trust that he has created between himself and his "television friends," he helps children cope with difficult issues, like fear of monsters, worries about the emergency room, and concerns about divorce and death.

What's Its Format?

Each visit begins and ends in the living room of Rogers' "television house," where he shows his viewers a wide variety of objects. Through video, he takes them to places where people make or work with everyday things from a crayon factory to a mushroom farm. As Rogers' neighbors and friends drop by, or as he visits them in their homes and places of work, the life of the "Neighborhood" unfolds stories of fulfillment and disappointment, and of the many ways that friends bring one another new interest, help, empathy, or support. Real-life visitors include people whose work is of interest to young children, ranging from bus drivers and biologists, to artists and athletes, and musicians and the people who make musical instruments. Part of each half-hour takes place in the "Neighborhood of Make-Believe," a puppet kingdom presided over by the authoritarian-but-kindly King Friday XIII and wise and strong Queen Sara Saturday.

Rogers, himself, never appears in this Make-Believe land; that's a separation intended to help children keep clear the difference between reality and fantasy. He is there behind the scenes, though, manipulating the puppets and giving most of them their voices.

Here in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, caring humans and the puppets work together to resolve conflicts, playing out inner dramas of early childhood. From time to time, King Friday XIII commands an opera, and Rogers composes one for the occasion. Rogers produced 13 such musical stories for the series.

Music in many forms has, from the beginning, been a signature element in the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* series. Fred Rogers is a composer and pianist with a degree in music composition from Rollins College in Florida. He writes the words and music for the much-loved songs in the series. His compositions are sophisticated yet singable, and they carry many of the series' developmental themes — for instance, "It's You I Like (it's not the things you wear)," "What Do You Do With the Mad That You Feel (when you feel so mad you could bite?)," and "Did You Know (that it's all right to wonder?)."

At the end of each program, Mister Rogers leaves his viewers with an affirmation of their value and uniqueness through his closing words, "There's only one person in the whole world exactly like you, and the people who care about you can like you — just because you're you!"

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THE METHODS BEHIND THE MAGIC: WHAT MAKES MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD WORK

Many people witness the "magic" of MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD - its profound and enduring appeal to young children, and the positive effect it has on them. But often those same people also say they don't understand why the series works so well.

The reason isn't magic at all. The main focus of this television series is on children's emotional development, and it's success is based on a combination of several factors, outlined here in brief:

I. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD ENCOURAGES CHILDREN TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES.

Many experts believe that the development of healthy self-esteem is one of the most critical tasks of growing up—and that self-esteem plays a major role in determining what kind of person a child will become.

Mister Rogers consistently supports a child's sense of self-worth through the crucial early years, with their various frustrations and inevitable failures. He helps young children understand the important ways in which they contribute to the life of their families, and he tells them, "You've made this day a special day just by being you. You are the only person like you in this whole world. And people can like you just because you're you."

II. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD HELPS CHILDREN LEARN THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR GROWING UP.

The series gives gentle yet firm support to children as they learn the timeless skills involved in growing up: cooperation, persistence, patience, sharing, and the ability to pay attention and to manage frustration. Mister Rogers helps children acknowledge feelings and learn to control impulses. At the same time, the series encourages the development of healthy curiosity and imagination. In effect, MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD helps young viewers learn the skills that are the foundation for learning readiness, which is the first of the National Education Goals.

III. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD IS MADE FOR CHILDREN.

Some adults feel the series is slow and simple. It is. Research clearly shows that's how young children learn best. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD is carefully designed to speak effectively to preschool-aged children. Mister Rogers talks in ways children understand, at a pace they can absorb, and with a consistency that creates a calm, safe place for preschoolers to visit. He leaves time for children to reflect and respond, and he takes time to prepare them for what will come next and to explain what has gone before.

More on page 2

MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD is underwritten by Public Television Stations and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The visually-simple sets and puppets, matching the capabilities of young children, allow children to use their own imaginations, and encourage children to create their own playthings and to engage imaginative play.

It all works: millions of children in three generations have responded with trust and love.

IV. THERE ARE SOLID REASONS BEHIND WHAT'S INCLUDED IN MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS.

The series is based on widely-accepted principles of child development and child psychology. Fred Rogers, members of his staff, and consultants to the series have both expertise and experience in the field.

Subjects like children's fear of separation from parents, confusion between reality and fantasy, and fear of "being so mad you could bite" may seem simple (and even silly) to adults—but people who work with young children know those topics are primary issues for preschoolers struggling to understand their world and their place in it. Children love and trust Mister Rogers because he addresses those issues and others like them in an open and direct manner.

V. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD ENCOURAGES APPRECIATION OF AND RESPECT FOR OTHERS.

Mister Rogers strongly endorses every person's individual worth. ("Each one of us is valuable," he says, "and there is nobody in the whole world exactly like you.") He is genuinely interested in visitors to his "Neighborhood" and shows unfailing respect for and courtesy toward everyone with whom he interacts. In effect, he consistently models the appreciation of inherent individual worthiness that is the cornerstone of a successful multicultural society.

VI. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTES VALUES THAT ARE UNIVERSALLY IMPORTANT TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Fads and fashion—in television and in society—change constantly, but the values on MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD are timeless and universal. The basic developmental tasks of early childhood—the things preschoolers need to learn and understand to grow into succeeding stages of life—remain constant regardless of time, place, or societal changes. So do the values that enable families (and whole societies) to nurture their children and help them grow.

These values, shared by Family Communications, professionals, and families across the country, include:

- Children are precious, and their earliest years are exceedingly important in laying the foundation for who and what they become.
- Children grow best when raised in responsible and caring ways.
- The ability to love and be loved is supremely important in every person's life, and that ability is best nurtured in the early years.
- Discipline and control are essential to healthy living—and the best discipline and control come from within.
- It is important to recognize the worth and the unique abilities of each individual child.
- Children can—and do—contribute in many ways to the life of a family.
- Parents are the most important people in children's lives; they are the premiere models and the final arbiters of a family's values.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID...

The following comments are from participants in the research study of the "Extending *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to Child Care" project. This 5-month study illustrated the multiple benefits of using *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* in the child-care setting.

COMMENTS FROM DIRECTORS

Changes in Staff:

- Teachers (are) more relaxed...slowed down pace...lowered voice level;
- Teachers exhibit more patience with the children...are more calm when correcting children;
- Teachers feel more confident in all aspects of teaching...more open to learning from others...did more planning.

Changes in Children:

- (Children are) less aggressive, more cooperative and tolerant;
- Children are understanding and kinder with each other...treat each other with more respect...are more patient with each other;
- Children are more self-confident...feeling good about themselves;
- Children are more creative in their play...more willing to take chances with new things;
- Children voice their feelings and talk about their feelings more...have improved verbal skills...are better conversationalists;
- Children did more problem solving;
- Children learned the importance of teamwork and (the value) of each member of the team;
- Children developed attitudes about right and wrong.

COMMENTS FROM TEACHERS

Changes in themselves:

- I take time out to answer questions...use more explanations;
- I have a better understanding of the needs of the children...their feelings and expressions;
- I'm more calm and laid back...more tolerant and patient;
- I now talk to children...not at them...speak softer, slower and more quietly;
- I'm taking a more social and developmental approach rather than "academic" approach to reaching goals;
- "He's built my self-esteem also...I feel that there is nothing I can't do"... I became a more confident teacher;
- I allow children to pick and choose their activities rather than planning them all myself;
- (It) showed me the value of TV as a means of selective instruction.

(More)

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COMMENTS FROM PARENTS

Changes in Children:

- Child discusses program/topics at home...shares some ideas from the program with other family members...asks to watch Mister Rogers at home now...(program) helps emphasize values taught at home;
- Child has better understanding of what his neighborhood is and who is in it;
- (Improved) child's sense of self-pride...having a positive self-outlook;
- Child can distinguish difference between reality and pretending/make-believe;
- Child appears to be more confident to try new things...asks to do things from the program;
- Child is more willing to participate in activities at preschool;
- Child shows more respect for other people's feelings...more sensitive to other's needs... child speaks more of emotions.

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JULY 1994

Young Children

The Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

- Positive social behaviors

Mr. Rogers says give children the essence of yourself

- Transitioning to school
- Teachers respond to an ethical issue

Developmentally appropriate TV

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood—

As Affective Staff Development for Teachers of Young Children:

A Story of Conflict, Conversion, Conviction, and Celebration

Renée Alda Marazon

Courtesy Family Communications, Inc.

For years, in my role as assistant professor of early childhood education at Lourdes College, I imposed my anti-television views on my students. "There could never be a reason to have television in a quality early childhood setting," I would say. In fact, I believed quality child care and television viewing were antagonists. There was no room for discussion and it was not difficult to convert students to the "no TV in child care" concept. After all, college-trained preservice teachers had sufficient knowledge of child development theory and principles to realize that television was a passive encounter at best and a harmful messenger at worst.

I remember well the day the call came in from our local public television station, WGTE Public Broadcasting, Toledo, Ohio. The caller wanted to know if I would be interested in attending a meeting with other college and university professionals to brainstorm ways of promoting public television in day care settings. The intended outcome of the meeting would be the beginnings of a proposal for funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).

The conflict

I was silently appalled at the mere thought of linking television to child care. I continued my silent reflection as the caller detailed the plans for the meeting, saying to myself, "Haven't we (society) done enough damage to children through this medium? Don't children already spend far too many hours viewing television? Now we are trying to find ways to justify television viewing in early childhood settings!" Then, I hesitantly responded. "Oh (pause) . . . uh . . . well, I would very much like to participate in such a meeting," I said, as I frantically checked my appointment book. Thank God that the caller could not read my mind or see the look of horror on my face. As I struggled with the image of television in child care, I began plotting my strategy to convert those who would gather for the first meeting.

In defense of children

I spent the week prior to the meeting developing my plan to dissuade this group from seeking funding for any television-related child care project. I pondered the current menu of children's programming. One program occasionally taunted me with evermore endearing images—*Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* (MRN). I just couldn't fit MRN into the mold of inappropriate programs.

The week passed quickly and I found myself seated around the discussion table at WGTE. It was soon clear to me that the station was intent on submitting a proposal to CPB for promoting the use of television in day care settings. I listened intently to the discussion around the table and to my own thoughts within. Suddenly, my thoughts came spilling out. "The only program that could possibly be aired in a child care center is MRN, not so much for the sake of the children but more so for the sake of the adults who work with them." There, I said it!

***Renée Alda Marazon**, M.Ed., is assistant professor and chair of the Department of Early Childhood at Lourdes College in Sylvania, Ohio. Renée was featured on the "Extending Mister Rogers' Neighborhood to Child Care" national teleconference and has served as consultant to Family Communications, Inc., the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and Southern California Public Television (KCET).*

And I continued, "Adults need to watch and listen as Mister Rogers models respect for young children through his words, tone of voice, mannerisms, facial expressions, and actions. For if, indeed, early childhood professionals are facilitators of child growth and development, and not instructors of skills and subjects, then surely we don't need an academic, teaching television program but rather one that would facilitate, support, and nurture 'whole child development' the way Mister Rogers does—especially the way he does it in the areas of affective and social development."

In support of children and teachers

Others around the table affirmed these thoughts and the grant-writing session was underway. In a few short weeks, WGTE would receive word from CPB that its proposal had been accepted for funding. Now the work would begin. The research design of the project was set up to measure changes in behavior that would result from children and caregivers viewing MRN together in their child care settings over a period of five months. The control group with whom I was most intimately involved viewed MRN, received *Mr. Rogers' Plan and Play Book*, and also acquired monthly training.

My role in the MRN project was that of curriculum coordinator. I was charged with designing and implementing the monthly training sessions. As I began planning for the training, I never lost touch with my original thoughts about the role of MRN in child care settings. My support for the MRN project had to remain faithful to the premise that adults, as well as children, need Mister Rogers as a mentor and model of appropriate interpersonal relations.

I soon realized that in order to plan and design meaningful training sessions, I needed to immerse myself in the same MRN episodes that the child care providers would be viewing with their children throughout the coming months. Armed with pen and paper, I settled down to view each 30-minute episode. I was intent on finding and recording feeling, virtue, value, moral, and self-concept themes and interactions. What I found and recorded was remarkable! Kindness, sharing, compassion, caring, joy, peace, love, confidence building, success, forgiveness, understanding, trust, autonomy, uniqueness, patience, honesty, goodness, and the list went on.

The effectiveness of MRN in communicating affective concepts to young children has been reported since 1973. Shirley (1975) reported children's increased willingness to share after viewing MRN episodes that stressed sharing, helping, and cooperation. Coates, Pusser, and Goodman (1976) noted increases in children's giving of positive reinforcements to other children and increased numbers of their social interactions with other children and adults in the preschool setting. Friedrich and Stein (1973) reported increases in prosocial behaviors when children view prosocial programs. The researchers also noted increased self-control in task persistence, rule obedience, and delaying tolerance. Children also sought the help of others after viewing MRN. This early research of the effects of MRN on young children began to set the stage for what I sensed might be the effects of MRN on teachers.

So, while I was intentional about searching out and recording objective evidence in the affective and social domains of child development, I knew that any viewers (teachers included) would necessarily, at a conscious or unconscious level, experience the same affections and hear the same messages from Mister Rogers as children did and as I did. I knew, too, that the best learning flows from direct experiences and interactions. Caregivers' direct experiences with Mister Rogers just had to evoke new thoughts for them! I realized also that my task throughout the training needed to be that of facilitator. I wanted to help teachers become more aware of themselves responding to Mister Rogers. Self-awareness, for them, would be the key to their own professional growth and would open them to change and new behaviors. And this self-awareness would be a natural response to their viewing MRN in their classrooms. I just needed to ask the right questions of them. I knew what I saw of Mister Rogers as mentor, model, and friend; I wondered what teachers would see for themselves.

The conversion

Given all of this thinking, I made large- and small-group sharing the focal point of each session. The following questions were used to stimulate discussions each time we met:

1. What problems/concerns did you have with viewing MRN?
2. What was the most significant episode?
3. What episode had the greatest impact on you?
4. What episode had the greatest impact on your children?
5. How have your children changed?
6. How have you changed?

The first month's training session (January) primarily offered technical assistance to the caregivers and focused on explaining the project, the process, and the materials; viewing practices related to safety; group viewing; and tips from Mister Rogers. One activity was designed to sensitize teachers to television as a sensory-stimulating medium. Teachers were given a five-minute clip of MRN with a picture and no sound, followed by a five-minute clip of MRN with sound and no picture. This single exercise served to heighten teachers' awareness of the power of the media to communicate through the senses.

When the teachers gathered four weeks later for the February training session, I asked them to reflect on questions 1 through 6 above; then, they met in small groups of three to five people to share their reflections. As curriculum coordinator and session facilitator, I was interested in their responses to questions 2 through 6; however, my primary interest was in teachers' responses to question 6: How have you changed? The following responses represent the teachers' shared reflections to that question.

How have you changed?

February

The teachers spoke openly about their first month of viewing MRN in their classrooms. Most of the changes they noted in themselves were reflected in their teaching practices with young children.

- I have slowed down my pace and my schedule.
- I realized that Fred is supporting what I am already doing with children.
- Fred has become a resource for me in my classroom.
- I recall/remember how Mister Rogers responds, and I now respond differently to children than I used to.
- I feel warm when I'm watching MRN.
- My director noticed that I have changed in how I respond to my children.
- I am more relaxed and quiet with the children.
- I feel like I have been given a boost, refreshed after many years of teaching.

March

By March the teachers had become more specific in their responses. They began to detail changes in their interactions with children and in their attitudes toward the children in their care.

- There are times when I have made mistakes and MRN has helped me.
- I concentrate more on children's feelings, especially their anger and frustration . . . . I'm trying to get them to verbalize more.
- I try to mediate more . . . let them settle their arguments by talking about them and working things out . . . . I tell them they have to solve their disagreements.
- I find myself slowing down and talking more like Mister Rogers.
- I seem to have more patience on the days we watch MRN.

Courtesy Family Communications, Inc.

April

During the April training session, teachers again described changes in the way they related to and worked with young children; however, the behavior changes seemed to be even more specific than those noted in the preceding months. Teachers also began to reflect more on their role as professionals.

- I'm more apt to take suggestions from the children and listen to what they have to say.
- I'm more open and willing to risk listening to children.
- I am more open to change.
- I have adapted the MRN methods of how Mister Rogers reacts to and with children and how he webs themes, emotions, and ideas together.
- I have gained respect for myself as a caregiver.
- I am more in tune with and have more respect for the children. I am more driven to teach children that they are special.
- I have come to realize that I have the children during the most important hours of the day, and I realize that my words and actions have a great influence on children's lives and thoughts; the power is frightening.
- I'm more eager to give children positive messages about themselves.

With each successive month of viewing MRN, the teachers' anecdotes appeared to focus inwardly more and more, describing MRN's impact on themselves as persons and as teachers. The teachers' self-awareness anecdotes (6. How have you changed?) actually outnumbered their child-awareness anecdotes (5. How have your children changed?). I say this not to minimize the changes that teachers perceived were taking place in their children but rather to underscore the quality and number of changes that were taking place in each of them as teachers. These teachers were engaged in the first step necessary for professional growth, that of "inner conversion," and it is only in taking this first step that they would be able to support and nurture conversion in others, namely, the children in their care.

May

By May, the teachers' anecdotes gave evidence of changes that were deeper than conversion. The tone of their responses during the final, large-group sharing session seemed to indicate deep conviction.

- I stop myself before I talk to the children.
- I am more intentional and aware of what I am doing and saying to the children.
- I have learned so much about myself.
- I grew personally as a provider and a parent.
- I have grown more as an early childhood professional.
- I feel more valued as an early childhood professional.
- There have been a lot of self changes.
- I feel more important; "I am special."
- I have recognized more changes in myself than in my children.

Becoming more aware of what we are doing, stopping ourselves before we speak, learning about ourselves, valuing ourselves, feeling important and special, and recognizing changes in ourselves are all necessary ingredients for personal as well as professional growth. The responses that teachers gave during the fifth training session actually indicated changes in their "inner selves"; and change of this depth may have the greatest impact of all on child care providers, both as persons and as professionals.

My notes and personal experiences of the large- and small-group sharing sessions communicated a progression toward "inner conversion." At the beginning of the project, teachers reported how their "actions and behaviors" had changed. After a few months of viewing MRN, they began reporting more attitudinal changes (feelings toward others), and, by the end of the

project, they reported their deeper inner changes (feelings toward self). Although teachers reported changes in behaviors early on in the project, it appeared to be the experience of viewing MRN over time that enabled them to report changes in feelings toward themselves.

In my 18 years of working in a variety of teaching and administrative roles in early childhood, I have, at times, witnessed teachers' behaviors and attitudes that typically characterize individuals with low self-esteem. This should not come as a surprise, in light of our low wages and the sense we get from society that children are a low priority in the world today. Some low self-esteem behaviors have been characterized by Erikson (1963) as global feelings of mistrust, doubt, guilt, and inferiority. At times, teachers seem to display fear of change, need to control, and need to possess—all aspects of low self-esteem. I have also observed the negative effects these behaviors have on the self-esteem of coworkers. I have often wondered how it can be that caregivers so effectively nurture and support the self-concept of young children and yet fail to nurture their own self-concept and the self-concept of other adults.

It wasn't until I began teaching courses and seminars on "self-concept development" that I recognized one possible explanation. Often one or more participants would ask me, "How can I support and nurture self-concept in young children when I realize, by what you are teaching me, that my own self-concept was damaged when I was a young child." Pinan (1986) has lightly brushed the surface of this topic in research involving autobiographical sketches of teachers as related to their being "better liked" or "less liked" by their pupils. But, no research is available to correlate the relationship of autobiographies of teachers to their choice of a profession or to their teaching styles and affective traits. Could it be that one of the reasons we choose to work with young children is to provide for them what was lacking in our own childhood? Could it be that we are striving to nurture our "inner child" through our work?

These thoughts have always remained with me and continue to influence how I interpret my own experiences, especially the experiences of the MRN project. I believe an inner conversion was experienced by the teachers involved in the project. I believe the training sessions were not training sessions at all but rather a forum in which the teachers could articulate their ongoing reflections about changes in their behaviors, changes in their attitudes toward others, and, most importantly, changes in their feelings toward themselves. I believe, too, that teachers' awareness of their changing "inner selves" was the result of relating, over time, to Mister Rogers.

The conviction

Whatever Mister Rogers said to his child audiences, he also said to his caregiver audiences as they watched and listened with the children in their care. For five months teachers heard in so many different ways, "You are special. I like you just the way you are." And the many different ways of Mister Rogers continuously and consistently nurtured their self-esteem. There is no question in my mind that if teachers, as well as parents, sit down with children to view MRN, they, too, will experience Mister Rogers speaking directly to them and to each one's inner child. And who among us doesn't need to hear again and again, "You are special. I like you just the way you are"?

Professional growth for early childhood teachers needs to reach beyond the well-known "skill-development" areas of curriculum planning to the lesser known "affective-development" areas of teacher training. Self-concept development is but one component of affective development, which holds the potential to transform teachers from within in ways that will impact both them and their children for a lifetime.

The celebration

I have no doubt that since the final training (sharing) session the wonderful teachers involved in the MRN project have continued to nurture and support the affective and social life of young children as well as to grow from within. I also have no doubt that what began for me as conflict has turned into inner conversion and the conviction that MRN not only *has* a place in early childhood settings but, in fact, *should* have a place in training teachers to nurture the affective and social life of young children. Perhaps even more importantly, MRN now has a place in supporting the inner life of teachers who care for young children. Finally, all of this is cause for celebration!

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[Volume 49, Number 5]

EXCERPTS FROM MR. ROGERS' KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE 1993 NAEYC ANNUAL CONVENTION IN ANAHEIM CALIFORNIA

That Which Is Essential Is Invisible to the Eye

Fred M. Rogers

On the walls of our Family Communications office are reminders of who we are and what we do: photographs, drawings and paintings from children, and letters from parents. And, there's also a framed piece of calligraphy with a quotation from *The Little Prince*, "That which is essential is invisible to the eye."

These words remind me of what my friend Marian Wright Edelman says about her childhood: "While life was often hard and resources scarce, we always knew who we were and knew that the measure of our worth was inside our heads and hearts and not outside in our possessions . . . ."

Those of us who are in this world to educate—to care for—young children have a special calling: a calling that has very little to do with the collection of expensive possessions but has a lot to do with the worth inside of heads and hearts. In fact, that's our domain: the heads and hearts of the next generation, the thoughts and feelings of the future.

Children are born ready to grow, ready to be valued. And, as Ernest Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation and PBS and we all know, children are born *ready to learn!* What will it take for our *whole* society to insist on the best for children?

• • •

Have you heard about the Royal Knights of Spanish Harlem? (I learned about them from Gloria Steinem's book *The Revolution from Within.*) At a junior high school at East 101st Street in New York, a man by the name of Bill Hall teaches English as a second language. As a hobby, he *loves* to play chess; and, even though his principal and most of the other teachers advised against it, Bill Hall started the school's first chess club. The handful of kids who came got ridiculed by their friends for staying after school, and some of their parents told them that playing chess was a waste of time.

Nevertheless, 12 boys stuck it out. They learned chess, and they called their team the Royal Knights. After a while, they even started to *win* some local competitions. And little by little their new sense of competence carried over into their classrooms; their grades improved remarkably. And, what's more, they finished third in the New York State Chess Finals, which made them eligible for the junior high finals in California. Bill Hall raised the money to fly those Royal Knights the whole way across the country, and in that national competition they finished 17th out of 109 teams. After that, they had many other successes; and, by the time those boys were headed for senior high school, they were talking about futures in law, accounting, teaching, and computer science.

When a reporter asked what they were doing before Bill Hall and chess playing came into their lives, one boy said, "Hanging out on the street, a few drugs now and then." Another said, "Just lying on my bed and getting yelled at for being lazy." The reporter asked if there was anything in their schoolbooks that made the difference? One boy said, "Not until Mr. Hall thought we were smart, and then we were!"

Bill Hall competed with the lure of the street for those boys' souls. He *loved* chess and he loved those players and he won! There are other stories like that, people insisting on the best for children.

• • •

When I was doing my practicum work in child development at the University of Pittsburgh, I remember hearing about one of the fathers of a kindergartner who was a gifted sculptor. At the request of the director, this man came to the kindergarten once a week and simply loved clay in the midst of the children. He didn't *teach* about clay, he just loved it and fashioned it and showed how he could express his feelings with it in that place where the children could watch him. And little by little the children themselves began to love *their* clay and what it felt like to work with it and what they found they could make of it.

That sculpturing father came regularly for a whole year! I'm told that not before or since in that kindergarten have children used the medium of clay in such imaginative, satisfying ways—all because they caught the enthusiasm of someone who loved what he did right in front of them.

Whenever I meet people, I'm always curious to know the ways they have of dealing with their feelings. What is it that allows them to express their joys, their anger, their sadness in ways that don't hurt themselves or anybody else. What are *your* natural ways of expressing who *you* really are? How do you use them to deal with frustration? Anger? Sadness? Rage?

Gymnastics, cooking, baseball, painting, piano, puppets, singing?—*comfortably using and loving your way in front of the children in your care may just be the greatest gift you ever give them.*

The children of our country are exposed every minute, every day to hurtful ways of people dealing with their feelings. Just on television alone they see 200,000 acts of violence by the time they reach 18. It breaks my heart! Violence sells!!! But we must do all we can to put a stop to it wherever we find it.

In the meantime if you like to make things out of wood, or sew, or dance, or style people's hair, or dream up stories and act them out, or play the trumpet, or jump rope, or *whatever* you really *love* to do, and you love that in front of your children, that's going to be a far more important gift than anything you could ever give them wrapped up in a box with ribbons. And what's more, the last thing in the world you have to be is perfect at it. It's the spirit that gives that kind of gift its wings.

• • •

What a difference you make, you who serve children and their families so directly! And they're so well served when they can come to believe that there isn't anything in their lives that can't be expressed in words or play or craft or whatever healthy way they happen to choose. Such a gift will serve them all their days.

Each one of us here has people who have helped us come this far in our lives. *Nobody* gets to be a competent human being without the investment of others.

My hunch is that if we allow ourselves to give who *we* really are to the children in our care, we will some way inspire cartwheels in their hearts. What great professions we are all in together!

***Fred M. Rogers** is creator, writer, and host of* Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, *the longest-running program on PBS. His background includes a bachelor's degree in music composition, television production at NBC, and graduate studies in child development at the University of Pittsburgh.*

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Visiting Mister Rogers' Neighborhood With Your Children

Viewing Fred Rogers as a Professional Colleague

Everyone knows that Mister Rogers is a softspoken, gentle person, and that his "Neighborhood" is a safe place for young children.

What most adults -- including many child-care professionals -- perhaps don't know is that the program's outwardly simple facade rests on a structure of sound early childhood philosophy and practice.

To begin with, "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" is developmentally appropriate. Unlike many TV shows that profess to be for very young children, but are subtly aimed at older siblings or adults, the program is so exclusively geared to preschoolers that even parents often don't understand what their children see in it.

What is it that attracts them? One extremely important aspect is the pacing. In contrast to the frenetic, loud, image-piled-on-image formats of so many cartoon and other children's shows, the program is carefully paced to accommodate the thought processes and reaction times of preschoolers. It's designed to be interactive; it invites the child to think about and respond to what Mister Rogers and the other Neighborhood "residents" say and do.

The program content is also meticulously planned. Fred Rogers, who writes the scripts and song lyrics and composes the music, has studied the early childhood field and worked directly with children. He also consults child psychologists and other experts to develop themes and reach children in ways that are sound and tuned in to their lives today. Typical of that are theme weeks devoted to being cared for by non-family members and to explaining why and how parents work outside the home.

A third component is the overall tone of the program. Fred Rogers clearly respects his young audience. He uses words they understand, but never talks down to them. His voice is soft, and his manner is consistently genuine, lending support to his familiar words, "I like you just the way you are."

In short, one way to look at Fred Rogers is as a fellow child-care professional who happens to use the medium of TV to achieve many of the aims that are pursued in preschools everywhere.

The Neighborhood Child-Care Project

In 1990-1991, a study funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting was cooperatively conducted by the University of Toledo and Family Communications, Inc., producers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood." Two of its main purposes were to determine how, and to what extent TV was being used in child-care settings and to explore ways for "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" to positively affect the lives of children in those settings.

As a result of that research, which comprised a survey of Toledo, Ohio child-care providers followed by a five-month field study involving 25 of the area's centers, the project, "Extending Mister Rogers' Neighborhood to Child Care" was developed.

The cornerstone of the project is that the teacher experiences the TV programs with the children; they watch together, either during regularly scheduled broadcasts or on videotapes shown at convenient times. This allows the adult to observe the children's reactions and listen to their spontaneous comments during the program, and so to better understand their perspective. It also fosters a cozy atmosphere that encourages discussion after the show, while the feelings it touches are fresh. The adult, serving in a sense as proxy for Fred Rogers, can continue the dialogue he began, helping the children apply the program's messages to their real-life situations.

The project's second major component is "Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book," a curriculum guide developed for child-care providers to use with the TV program.

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The guide, which has material for over 600 episodes, is a large spiral-bound book that lies flat when open. Program episodes are numbered and briefly described. Beneath each description is a related play activity and a list of ways it might be used to help children. All activity materials are simple and easy to obtain. With each set of episodes are a list of the week's songs and "Thoughts for the Week," in which Rogers talks briefly to teachers about some of the developmental concepts that will be explored. There's also space for teacher notes.

To illustrate: For programs 1346-1350, Rogers notes in "Thoughts for the Week" that learning to identify emotions and to express them constructively are important developmental milestones. Further, he touches on how a young child feels when an adult expresses emotion -- anger or pleasure, for example -- in response to what the child does.

In Monday's episode, "A magician performs in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe and turns a pretend tear into a glistening jewel. Mister Rogers stresses the importance of being able to talk about your feelings." The day's activity, planned to help children do that, calls for them to arrange cut-out features on paper plates in response to questions beginning, "How would you feel if..."

The curriculum guide can be used over and over, in conjunction with annual broadcast schedules that indicate what number episode will air on each date. Episodes are repeated each year, with three new weeks of programs added annually. Supplements are prepared for those not included in the Plan & Play book.

The back of the guide has sections on how to make various foods and play materials, as well as the lyrics to more than thirty songs featured on the show. The two indexes list activities by general categories (art, cognitive, language, etc.) and by specific topics (biting, body awareness, competence, etc.).

What were the findings of the pilot project?

Based on their observations and evaluations of teachers' and children's behavior, the researchers reported positive results. The evaluation tool for teachers was the Early Childhood Teacher Observation Checklist (B. Briggs,1987) and for children the classifications of Friedrich-Cofer et al.(1979). Subjective reactions from participating teachers and directors tended to agree with their conclusions, as did those of most parents of participating children. According to research literature:

"The major finding from the data analysis indicates that all four groups of teachers became more supportive of children's emotional and social development as a result of using Mister Rogers' Neighborhood on a regular basis.

"Statistically significant differences in the teachers' behaviors across the length of the study were indicated. In other words, it appears that teachers were able to recognize and model Fred Rogers' nurturing behavior, and in turn demonstrate behaviors associated with supporting children's emotional and social growth.

"The self-report and/or anecdotal data from the teachers and their directors also confirmed this finding. When the directors were asked to indicate what changes they had noticed in staff, those directors who had daily contact with teachers and children most often described that the teacher had become 'calmer,' used a lowered voice more often with children, and seemed more relaxed."

Teachers who participated were asked to comment on any changes in themselves that they attributed to taking part in the project. Their evaluations, researchers note, were very similar to those of the directors. Some of the changes noted:

- ❑ Taking more of a developmental than an academic approach
- ❑ Talking more "to" than "at" children
- ❑ Becoming more conscious of being role models
- ❑ Taking more time to explain and to answer questions
- ❑ Having more patience, maintaining a slower pace

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- Not taking for granted that the children already know something

Asked how daily scheduling was affected, the teachers' comments included that they used more imagination, made greater use of puppets and other dramatic play and added more hands-on activities. Regarding curriculum planning, individual responses included expanding the learning center and free time, using more science projects and dealing more with children's feelings.

How were the children affected? According to the researchers, "Overall, the data suggest that watching 'Mister Rogers' Neighborhood' may have helped lower the amount of aggression children demonstrated toward their peers." When participating teachers were asked what changes they saw in the children that might be due to the program, "the word that occurred most often to describe the change was 'kinder.' Children were said to be kinder and more cooperative with each other." Finally, the researchers add, "Teachers also noted that children would refer to the comments Mister Rogers said during the show, or ask 'What would Mister Rogers do?' in a particular situation. One teacher's comment about a boy in the study is a good example. He said, 'I may have holes in my socks, but I am still special -- Mister Rogers said so.'"

Parents were also asked what changes participation in the study seemed to have made in their children. Individual responses included enhanced sense of self-pride, more confidence about new endeavors, more respect for other people's feelings, development of the ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy, strengthened verbal skills and improvement in ability to share.

A Director Comments

Cindy Klein, director of **Cradle and Crayon Child Care Center** in Maumee, Ohio, which participated in the pilot project, was asked what, if any, changes she noted in the children after the five months. "For the most part," she says, "the children who were part of the study group were maybe less aggressive. They slowed themselves down a little bit; seemed to take their time about things. A year after the pilot project, while we were still watching the show and doing the activities, we could ask the children, 'Do you think that's what Mister Rogers would do?' You would get them to reflect on someone else's feelings, not just on their own."

And the teachers? "You feel that he wants you to slow down. The first week, it was hard to adjust to that, but eventually you find yourself doing the same thing." At the moment the center can't participate in the project because TVs are no longer available, and Klein adds that consequently, "I think the pace has picked back up."

Does she have any reservations about the TV show? "Eighty-five to ninety percent of what the children saw were things they really enjoyed," she says, "but a few shows were too old. They were taped maybe in the '60s or '70s and not updated, and the children realized it. And a few shows went way over their heads."

Children's ages affected their responses, too, she adds. "Our three-year-olds didn't like the Land of Make-Believe. They couldn't express why; they just said they didn't like it. The four-year-olds loved it. When it came on, the younger ones got up and moved around, but the older children enjoyed the whole program and would tell their parents what Mister Rogers had talked about.

"They all enjoyed the activities very much. We usually did them right before or right after the show. If we didn't have time, we'd hold it over to the next day. One good example is the episode about the straw factory. At lunch, each child was given a straw. They were thrilled to have straws 'from the straw factory,' and they told their parents all about it."

Klein has this advice for directors considering participating in the project: "You have to give it enough time. It was about a month and a half before we saw any significant change. Even with the support of the TV station, you have to try it out for a good period before you decide whether it's a good project.

"Do some effective planning. Don't walk in at eight in the morning and start thinking about what you'll do. And adapt the activities for your children: Can they do it themselves? Do you have to do some of the work for them? What supplies are available?"

The Neighborhood in the Classroom

Karen S. Roadruck of WGTE-TV of Toledo, Ohio, a former child-care director who coordinated the research study, says the project aims for TV to be used "intentionally, effectively and interactively. When we know in advance what's going to be discussed, we can plan activities and discussions based on it. For example, if I know Mister Rogers is going to where pretzels are made, I'll serve pretzels and suggest they watch Mister Rogers that day to see how they're made. Then, the next day, we might make pretzels in class."

Roadruck believes children shouldn't be forced to watch, or to sit rigidly while viewing the program. If a child wants to lie down, sit on a caregiver's lap or hold a toy or stuffed animal, for instance, that's fine. Children should also be free to move around and to stop watching if they choose. She suggests placing materials like puzzles, crayons and magic markers on the fringes of the TV area, to encourage quiet play, as often a child who's not watching is still attentive to what's being said.

"Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" is unique, Roadruck believes. "In today's society, there's so much emphasis on academic learning and getting your child to achieve in the public schools," she says. Along with Mister Rogers, I believe that there are two keys to learning readiness -- positive self-esteem and curiosity about the world.

"I think the benefits of watching are increased when children watch with a caring adult. The show nurtures the self-esteem of young children and also shows understanding of the needs and concerns all children have. Mister Rogers accepts the child and takes him or her from there.

"Mister Rogers is a role model for teachers. His is the only program on TV today that deals with the affective development of the child. Some adults don't credit it enough because the kinds of changes it brings about; increase in self-esteem, for example, aren't like learning numbers or letters. They're not as easy to see in a short time."

For more information, contact:

AISHA WHITE OR HEDDA SHARAPAN

FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
4802 FIFTH AVENUE
PGH., PA 15213
(412)687-2990
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"Mister Rogers Plan & Play Book" may be ordered from:

Marketing Department
Family Communications
4802 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 687-2990
FAX (412) 687-1226
Price: $14.95 plus $3.75 shipping and handling

It's also available from many Public Broadcasting Service television stations. Each participating PBS station offers the book at an individually determined price. Some stations have received grants to provide it free of charge, some will allow you to purchase or borrow the training videotape, "Extending Mister Rogers' Neighborhood to Child Care," and some offer one or both as part of a larger promotional package. Several stations conduct workshops to help child-care professionals participate in the project, and others have arrangements with local colleges. Contact your local PBS station for specifics.

"Often the kindest thing one can say about a television program these days is that it is a waste of time. Much of television, though, is degrading, reducing important human feelings to the status of caricature or trivia. Some of it, in my opinion, even encourages pathology."

Fred Rogers in booklet, "What Does Fred Rogers Say About His Work and About the World of Childhood?"

"Anything human is mentionable, and anything mentionable is manageable."

Fred Rogers on his philosophy that young children need to talk about the things that trouble them.

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HINTS ABOUT HOW CHILDREN WATCH TV

Here are some ideas from Part I of the "Extending *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to Child Care" training videotape:

Children watch television in different ways.

- Some like to lie on their stomachs or on their backs.
- Some slouch or wiggle.
- Some like physical closeness with the adult - snuggling on a lap, cuddling in, or having an arm around them.
- Some like to hold their blanket or favorite toy or a stuffed animal.

Children's attention may drift during the program.

- Children don't have to be glued to the set to be getting messages from it; remember this if they start to move around.
- If the children drift away, it's not an indication that something's wrong with the program or that something's wrong with the child. There can be lots of reasons why a child may not want to sit and watch what's on television at that moment.
- Younger children may watch mainly when Mister Rogers is on the screen and wander away during the Neighborhood of Make-Believe segment. If you keep the set on, those children may want to come back for the ending with Mister Rogers.

Additional Helpful Tips

- If you have taped the program, you may want to show it in segments. [One provider we know, who works with children who have developmental delays, shows only the opening segment up to the Neighborhood of Make-Believe in the morning. Later in the day she shows the rest of the program. She does the activities when she feels it's appropriate.]
- You could offer crayons and paper, small toys or puzzles for children whose attention drifts from the television.

Safety Issues Regarding Television Sets

- The television set is safest when it's on a low cart, bolted down or held securely with a strap.
- The power cord should be out of the path where children walk.
- When not in use, the television set should be stored away or covered with a blanket or a box.
- **DON'T LET THE CHILDREN HELP MOVE THE SET.** All of a television set's weight is on the front, and it can easily tip over and seriously injure a child.

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MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD
CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP®

WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____

1. How did you learn about the workshop?

   _____

   _____

2. When did you participate in the workshop?

   _____

3. Who hosted the training? (name of station or agency)

   _____

4. Where did the training take place? (city, state)

   _____

5. Are you

   ____ a home child-care provider?

   ____ a child-care center teacher?

   ____ a child-care center director?

   ____ a preschool teacher?

   ____ a foster parent?

   ____ other _____

(Please check "home child care provider" if you are a relative, nanny, or any other person directly caring for children in the home.)

6. How many children do you care for in your site/classroom? _____

7. Are you using, do you plan to use, or encourage the use of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* in your child-care setting? _____

8. Are you using, do you plan to use, or encourage the use of the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book* in your child-care setting? _____

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9. Please give us your comments on the training. What did you like most about it?

How could it be improved?

10. Please give us your comments on the print materials you received at the training.

11. What additional information or services would you like to receive to help you use public television creatively and interactively with the children in your care?

Please return this evaluation form to your facilitator, or mail as soon as possible to:

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Child Care Partnership
Family Communications, Inc.
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Pittsburgh, PA 15213

MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD
CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP®

WE'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU AND YOUR "NEIGHBORHOOD."
Please complete this form. It will help us learn who you are and how we can reach you with additional materials.

Name _____

Name of child-care site

_____

Work address _____

_____

Work phone _____ Home phone _____

Number of children in your facility/center/program _____

Number of children in your care _____ Ages _____

Please provide names and addresses of other caregivers you think may be interested in this training on the back of the form.

THANK YOU!

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Number of children in your care _____ Ages _____

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THANK YOU!

Please provide names, addresses, and phone numbers of caregivers you think may be interested in attending a *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Child Care Partnership* training session.

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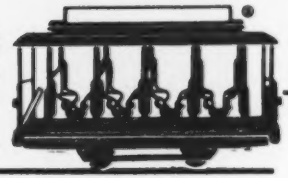

Training Workshop

Certificate of Attendance

This Certifies that

_____

has completed _____hours of training on _____, 199

to learn about using "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" creatively and interactively in child care settings.

_____
MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD
Child Care Partnership Trainer

_____
Fred Rogers

"You are a friend - you are special to me" - Fred Rogers

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